

## House Passes \$70 Million for 9/11 Health Care

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Washington, D.C. — Reps. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), Jerrold Nadler (D-NY), Peter King (R-NY), and Michael McMahon (D-NY) today hailed the House passage of the Fiscal Year 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act (H.R. 1105), which contains \$70 million in new funding for federal 9/11 health programs. The new funding, combined with \$112 million carried over from previous years, will cover the World Trade Center Medical Monitoring and Treatment Program's \$182 million estimated cost for FY 2009.

"The \$70 million in this bill will ensure that the heroes of 9/11 can get the care they need for another year," Maloney said. "Once again, I thank Chairman David Obey for helping fulfill our nation's moral responsibility to help those who are sick as a result of 9/11. With the support of President Obama and Speaker Pelosi, we hope to pass comprehensive legislation this year to provide long-term care and compensation to 9/11 responders, lower Manhattan residents, and others in need."

"With \$70 million now approved in the Appropriations bill, the WTC Centers of Excellence are guaranteed full funding for the rest of the year," said Rep. Nadler. "The \$182 million in federal funding for the WTC health program will ensure that we can continue, without interruption, to monitor and treat first responders and community members living with 9/11-related illnesses. Thanks again to Congressman Obey for making sure this program will continue."

"It's been over seven years since the heroes of 9/11 were exposed to the dust cloud, yet the health effects from exposure continue to develop," said King. "Constant monitoring and treatment are essential to the health of all who were exposed and I am pleased that this money has been included so that this vital program can continue."

"I applaud my colleagues for passing the Omnibus Appropriations Act which will provide \$70 million in critical funds needed to ensure all those suffering as a result of 9/11 receive the health care they need," said McMahon. "This is truly a positive step towards providing the comprehensive legislation all those affected deserve. I also want to specifically thank my colleagues, Reps. Maloney, Nadler and King, with whom I have worked closely on this important issue; it is because of their unwavering dedication to this cause that we are able to provide proper healthcare to these victims of 9/11."

The \$410 billion omnibus bill encompasses nine separate appropriations measures that stalled last year when the Bush administration insisted on preserving severe cuts to health care, education, law enforcement, and other programs contained in its FY 2009 budget proposal. The omnibus bill reflects an agreement between the House and Senate and will likely be sent to President Obama's desk in its current form.

Earlier this month, Maloney, Nadler, King, McMahon, and their colleagues in the New York congressional delegation reintroduced the 9/11 Health and Compensation Act (H.R. 847), which would provide critical health care and compensation for those sickened or injured in the aftermath of 9/11. The Members of Congress hope to pass the bill this year with President Obama's support.

The relevant section of the Omnibus Appropriations Act states that " \$70,000,000 shall be available until expended to provide screening and treatment for first response emergency services personnel, residents, students, and others related to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center." The bill's explanatory statement says that "for the World Trade Center (WTC) Medical Monitoring and Treatment program, the fiscal year 2009 program level is \$182,000,000."

Approximately \$112,000,000 in carryover balances from prior year appropriated funds are available in fiscal year 2009. Combined with the \$70,000,000 included in this bill, the total amount available for the WTC program is sufficient to continue to expand the program in the New York City area and around the country for first response emergency personnel, residents, students, and others whose health has been impacted from exposure to toxins in or around the WTC site.”